



Columbus Civil Service Commission
50 West Gay Street, Room 600
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Commonly Asked Questions About A Classification System

What Is A Classification System?

A classification system is a means by which positions which are similar are grouped into the same class or job title (such as Administrative Assistant) so that the same pay provisions, minimum qualifications and selection procedures can be applied. Positions are similar if they involve basically the same type and level of work. The use of classes makes it possible to manage personnel functions on a group rather than an individual basis.

Why Does The City of Columbus Use A Classification System?

Nearly all governmental agencies use a classification system. The general principle behind such a system is that employees performing essentially the same work should be eligible to receive the same pay.

What Happens If My Job Duties Change?

All departments undergo change; this is a natural occurrence in any business and in government. Many changes will not impact which class is the best match for a job, for example, shift changes or changes in days off. Other changes, however, may mean that the job has changed so significantly a new class would be appropriate, such as if supervisory responsibilities are added. When major new responsibilities are assigned, the Department is required to notify the Commission so that steps can be taken to determine if the position is properly assigned or whether it should be assigned to a new class.

What Are My Responsibilities?

Sometimes changes in one's job duties occur gradually over a long period of time and no one really notices the impact those changes may have had on a particular position. The person most directly affected by being properly classified is the incumbent employee. As such, every employee needs to be familiar with his or her official classification and should notify Civil Service in the event the position does not appear to be appropriate for presently assigned duties.

Why Should I Notify Civil Service If I Think My Position Is Not Properly Classified?

If your position is "under-classified," it is possible that the Department will reallocate the position and then appoint you to the new class, making you eligible for a current or future pay raise. It is also possible that the Department would not select you for the new class or would be prohibited from selecting you if, for example, you do not have the necessary qualifications. In that situation, however, you would have seniority rights in your current class and might be transferred to a different position. The Commission's job is to make sure City employees are performing the job duties for which they were hired and for which they are being paid.

Sometimes an employee is performing duties and responsibilities of a lower level. This would be true if someone had the official class title of Supervisor I but actually supervised no one. Even though the lower class may not be entitled to the same pay as the supervisor class, it is still in the employee's best interest to contact the Civil Service Commission. Otherwise, your job security may be threatened.

Why Should I Notify Civil Service If I Think My Position Is Not Properly Classified? (Cont'd.)

For example, if you are a provisional employee, this means you have not yet taken the test for Supervisor I. City employees who take the test for their own jobs usually have no difficulty passing the test because they are using the necessary job skills every day. If you are misclassified, however, you would be taking a test for a job that you do not perform. If you would fail the test, the Department would have no choice but to terminate you. On the other hand, if your position was properly classified and you took the right test, you would have a better chance of retaining your job. Further, you could then look forward to the possibility of being promoted to Supervisor I when the Department had a real vacancy in that job. A few extra dollars now may not pay off in the long run if a misclassification contributes to your termination.

Sooner or later the Commission will probably learn of a misclassification and will require the Department to correct the situation. However, you should notify Civil Service rather than waiting for this to occur because the sooner a misclassification is corrected, the more options that may be available and the better it is for you to protect your job security.

If you have additional questions about your position or City employment in general, please call the Civil Service Commission at (614) 645-8300.